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PROTOCOL: WHAT IT IS, WHERE IT COMES FROM AND WHY WE NEED PUBLISHED GUIDANCE

by

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Protocol plays a vital role in the daily life of military members and encompasses all the customs and courtesies that are part of our military heritage. It separates us from the rest of society and creates a bond that transcends history. However, while acknowledging the importance of protocol, the Air Force finds itself without written guidance, compiled in a single document, to guide Air Force members, especially Protocol Officers. This paper addresses this concern. It traces the history of protocol in social life, official life, and military life?in this area the three are intertwined because the subject is not mutually exclusive to any one. Since the creation of the Air Force there has always been some form of written protocol guidance?until recently. Currently, there is no published written guidance that encompasses all the different aspects of protocol and brings them together in one volume. The value of such a guide is evident to all Air Force members that have found themselves either assigned to a protocol office or tasked as a project officer for a visiting dignitary. The Air Force needs written guidance and the Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Air Force has acknowledged this requirement. The benefits of creating a protocol guide are unlimited and will enhance everything we do as a service.

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Preface

This research project addresses an existing problem within the Air Force, one that has been addressed before by students attending Air Command and Staff College—a lack of general guidance for protocol officers. However, this time the problem takes on new meaning because organizational changes have created an almost complete void in guidance on this subject. Major Sandra Wortman, the author, began working in Protocol as a brand new Captain in 1991. Since that time the author has been involved in every facet of protocol. Throughout her recent assignment at the Headquarters, United States Air Force, she was able to focus attention on this problem and propose possible solutions. This research paper addresses the problem and the required solution for the Air Force.

The author expresses gratitude to Lt Col Raul Meza for his patience and assistance in this endeavor and hopes they will both witness the creation of a protocol guide for the Air Force. The author is also grateful to the Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Air Force, Mr. William A. Davidson, and Col Rickard A. Lach, Chief of Air Force Protocol, for their support and desire to see such a guide come to fruition. Most of all, the author thanks the senior leadership throughout the Air Force that she has been fortunate enough to work with over the years, for their guidance in protocol matters.

Abstract

Protocol plays a vital role in the daily life of military members and encompasses all the customs and courtesies that are part of our military heritage. It separates us from the rest of society and creates a bond that transcends history. However, while acknowledging the importance of protocol, the Air Force finds itself without written guidance, compiled in a single document, to guide Air Force members, especially Protocol Officers. This paper addresses this concern. It traces the history of protocol in social life, official life, and military life—in this area the three are intertwined because the subject is not mutually exclusive to any one. Since the creation of the Air Force there has always been some form of written protocol guidance—until recently. Currently, there is no published written guidance that encompasses all the different aspects of protocol and brings them together in one volume. The value of such a guide is evident to all Air Force members that have found themselves either assigned to a protocol office or tasked as a project officer for a visiting dignitary. The Air Force needs written guidance and the Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Air Force has acknowledged this requirement. The benefits of creating a protocol guide are unlimited and will enhance everything we do as a service.

Chapter 1

Introduction

As long as there is order and discipline in the services, there will be protocol.

—Major Jo A. Ball, USAF

Protocol is defined by Webster's Dictionary as " the ceremonial forms accepted as correct in official dealings, as between heads of states or diplomatic officials."[1] Emily Post describes protocol as "in part, a code prescribing deference to rank."[2] The United States Air Force has defined protocol more extensively as "the accumulation of customs and regulations that deal with ceremonies and etiquette. It is a code of accepted practice and procedure that has developed gradually through the centuries. Protocol is not just an ornate show of ceremony; it reflects the observance of mutual respect and consideration between individuals as well as nations. It is deeply rooted in sound human relationships that have become the mode of behavior most likely to achieve understanding and cooperation in the conduct of international affairs. Just as manners help an individual get along with friends, protocol helps an individual, or nation, get along with other individuals or nations."[3] Within the Air Force, we use protocol as a broad term encompassing etiquette, military customs and courtesies, and ceremonies. It is practiced formally and informally in nearly everything we do. Why then, if it is such an important

part of our professional lives, don't we have written, authorized and published guidance as a tool for Air Force members?

This dilemma the Air Force currently finds itself in is not new, this same problem was addressed by Major Warren L. Steininger in 1974 while a student at Air Command and Staff College. At that time, Major Steininger attempted to "determine the feasibility of a standardized framework for operation of the protocol function at MAJCOMs and SOAs with the ultimate objective of providing base information upon which Air Force policy can be established."[4] Since that time, the Air Force has published guidance in the field of protocol. However, today, as the result of a series of events, the Air Force finds itself without policy guidance again in the field of protocol. Until recently at the Headquarters, United States Air Force no directorate would even take responsibility for protocol in the Air Force. This problem is multiplied because Protocol is considered a Special Duty Assignment, and Protocol Officers can come from any and every career field in the Air Force. As a result, officers flow in and out of protocol with very few ever building a broad enough depth of knowledge in the subject to be called an expert. This lack of expertise, coupled with the significance of protocol, clearly reflect the need for written guidance.

Notes

[1] Victoria Neufeldt, *Webster's New World Compact School and Office Dictionary* (New York: Simon & Schuster, Inc., 1995), 345.

[2] Peggy Post, *Emily Post's Etiquette*, 16th ed. (New York: HarperCollins Publishers Inc., 1997), 310.

[3] U. S. Department of the Air Force, *AF Pamphlet 900-1, Guide To Air Force Protocol* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office,1976), 3.

[4] Major Warren L. Steininger, *Basic Protocol Guidelines* (Maxwell Air Force Base: Air University, 1974), 3.

Chapter 2

Protocol: Historical Overview

Most arts require long study and application, but the most useful of all, that of pleasing, requires only the desire.

—Lord Chesterfield

Protocol has always existed in one form or another. The everyday courtesies we extend to other persons are a part of protocol. Over time, these customs and courtesies change, reflecting the dynamics of societies. Historically, protocol has evolved in three areas: social life, official life, and military life.

Social Life

In social life, etiquette is used when referring to protocol. The term etiquette comes from the French and means "tickets." During the rein of Louis XIV the Gardens of Versailles were being designed and planted. The King's gardener put up warning signs to keep people off the grass. These warning signs were actually tickets, or "etiquettes." These tickets directed people to the designated paths to follow while walking through the grounds. However, people ignored these etiquettes which prompted the gardener to complain to the King. As a result, King Louis issued an edict that commanded everyone to follow the etiquettes on the grounds. "Through time, the term became one which legislated all the rules for correct deportment in court circles, and

eventually it became the singular word that carries with it the instant definition of courteous, thoughtful behavior, impeccable manners, dignity and civility. Rules of etiquette are nothing more than sign-posts by which we are guided to the goal of good taste."[1]

Etiquette is not a set of rigid rules, it is basically a "code of behavior that is based on consideration, kindness, and unselfishness—something that should not, and will not, ever change. But manners, derived as they are from etiquette, must change to keep up with the world."[2] Therefore, "the philosophy of etiquette must be everlasting, the practice of manner is ever changing."[3] As our society changes, manners change to fit our needs. An excellent example of how changes in society affect manners is the growing popularity of computers and e-mail. An informal system of customs and courtesies for use of e-mail are quickly becoming formalized into a code of conduct for users. It is easy to see why manners are constantly changing.

Many people believe that good manners are dead today in our society. However, probably a more correct assumption is that manners are not dead, rather, our society has just become more informal and relaxed which eliminated the need for strict social guidelines for behavior. Many of our grandparents would never dream of going to a casual restaurant wearing shorts and sneakers; yet, for many young people today, shorts and sneakers are considered appropriate attire for casual occasions. These changes can be seen all through our own history.

In the early days of American Culture, some rules of etiquette were enforced by law with penalties for slander, lying, and cursing. Most of these rules came from the

government, the church, or even writings like *Poor Richard's Almanac*. George Washington even gave advice on etiquette in his *Rules for Civility*.[4]

At the beginning of the 19th Century, Americans abandoned former social rules that emphasized valor, modesty, and compassion. There was also a move for women to become stronger instead of pliant and weak. Some even advised Americans to avoid "the stiff and stately pomp of manners honed in European Courts."[5] Nathaniel Willis wrote: "We should be glad to see a distinctly American school of good manners, in which all useless etiquettes were thrown aside, but every politeness adopted or invented which could promote sensible and easy exchanges of good will and sensibility."[6] Social advice books from the 1830s till the Civil War focused on the view that etiquette was basically a set of rules to be learned. "Americans did not want to be lectured about character, chivalry, and morality. They wanted to learn the rules of behavior that would enable them to move comfortably in society."[7]

Things changed in America following the Civil War. There was a new nobility in America: John D. Rockefeller, Andrew Carnegie, and Cornelius Vanderbilt. Many people followed their lifestyles in society columns and emulated their behaviors. As a result, newspapers began publishing advice on etiquette and acceptable behavior for their readers which emphasized an aristocratic style of behavior where wealth was glamour. However, the rules of etiquette loosened again as Americans entered the 20th Century. The Great Depression caused the complete end of the former glamour and extravagance. Advice became more practical, simpler, and spontaneous. Even during the rebellious years of the 1960s, American people still sought advice on social behavior and this continues through today.[8]

To put etiquette in social life into perspective, "manners, ultimately, are a combination of common sense, generosity of spirit, and some specific know-how that helps us do things thoughtfully and with care for one another. Etiquette, ultimately, is the guiding code that enables us to practice these manners, to celebrate our traditions and ceremonies, and to be flexible enough to value and hold in esteem the rights, traditions and beliefs of others at the same time. Both must be fluid. Both embrace all that encompasses our lives today, from blended families, cyberspace courtesies, multicultural customs, global workplaces, and world religions to communal living spaces. These are not 'prescriptions for properness,' comprising rigid, formal, stuffy rules. Rather, they are guidelines for doing things with consideration, gracefully and well."[9]

Official Life

Official protocol exists to help smooth relationships between nations and their leaders just as etiquette and manners help us function daily in society. At this level, violations of protocol can have significant consequences. History has proven the need for widely accepted rules of protocol. In 1661, "France and Spain came dangerously close to war over a matter of ambassadorial precedence. In London, when the royal coach left the wharf after meeting the Swedish Ambassador, the coach of the French Ambassador tried to fall in immediately behind. The party accompanying the Spanish coach intervened and attacked the French escort. The Spanish won the sword play and took second place with their coach. In Paris, King Louis XIV, greatly incensed, ousted the Spanish Ambassador and demanded redress from Spain. Had Spain refused to agree that French Ambassadors should have precedence at foreign courts in the future, Louis would have declared war."[10] Nearly a century later, the French and Russian Ambassadors disagreed over their

respective places resulting in a sword fight. Gradually, a formal set of international protocol developed which minimized such incidents.

The first official attempt to establish international diplomatic precedence occurred during the Congress of Vienna in 1814. "The European powers attending the Congress had long been aware of the friction which this problem of protocol could cause. They had seen it interfere with orderly procedure and good relations among nations. They had known their diplomats to run into unnecessary inconvenience because of the lack of agreement on matters of ceremony. Differences had arisen again and again over the order of signatures on a treaty."[11] The great powers of the Quadruple Alliance, Russia, Austria, Prussia, and Great Britain, agreed on a plan to base precedence of their diplomatic representatives on their seniority in a post. They also placed diplomats into four categories: ambassadors and papal legates, ministers plenipotentiary, ministers resident, and charges d'affaires. The Conference of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1818 adopted provisions to sign treaties in alphabetical order.[12]

Official protocol functions primarily in international relationships. In the United States, official customs are considered those observed in Washington, D.C. and especially those observed at the White House. We can cite examples of this by looking at protocol in some of the administrations.

President George Washington was his own Chief of Protocol. He believed that "official formality and dignified etiquette were needed to gain respect for the new government and to enhance its authority."[13] Thomas Jefferson rejected the formalities based on French Court and was known to dress casually and entertained informally. In 1803 he issued his *Rules of Etiquette* which was based on principles of equality. Many

foreign diplomats were outraged at having their precedence taken from them. It was during his first official White House reception that the Marine Band played a new tune called "The President's March."[14]

President James Madison embraced the European precedent and reversed President Jefferson's ideas of protocol. During the next few administrations many elaborate parties and receptions were held with various heads of state and diplomats in attendance. Social functions slowed down once the Civil War began. President Abraham Lincoln finally agreed to hold a reception two years after the start of the war.[15]

One of the most popular functions at the White House was the annual New Year's Day reception which included the Diplomatic Corps, Cabinet members, and various government officials. By the time Rutherford B. Hayes was President, the guest list was up to one thousand. There was always a formal receiving line during these White House functions until President Hoover changed the format of official social functions. Instead of having a receiving line, he and Mrs. Hoover roamed from room to room mingling with their guests. After evening meals, President Franklin Roosevelt held a musicale in the East Room. By 1947, the Diplomatic Corps had grown because World War II broadened Americans to think at a more international level. The State Department listed and numbered the diplomats based on their length of service in Washington so President Truman could split them and have a dinner for the even numbered ones followed by another dinner for the odd numbered ones on another evening. President and Mrs. Eisenhower entertained more foreign Chiefs of State than any previous administration, bringing back formal entertainment to the White House. However, the Kennedy Administration brought a new level of entertainment to the White House. Mrs. Kennedy

made many changes to social functions—including the practice of mixing men and women guests during coffee after dinner. She also traveled internationally without the President and became an ambassador of good will. The Johnsons held the first Festival of Arts at the White House and brought American hospitality to the White House. President and Mrs. Reagan brought another new style of entertainment to Washington, D.C. with the addition of Hollywood glamour. It is clear that each President and First Lady have their own style of entertaining and it usually impacts the rest of society. There are a few differences—in an official receiving line the husband precedes his wife which is the reverse in social entertaining.[16] "Any organization or society must, if it is to thrive, operate under certain rules if for no other reason than to prevent chaos. The same applies to relations between governments. It is necessary that contacts between nations be made according to universally accepted rules or customs and some form of planned organization. That is protocol."[17]

Military Life

In military life, protocol is all those "aspects of everyday good manners combined with the traditions and customs of the various branches of the armed forces. Servicemen and servicewomen are considered as representatives not only of their service, but of the United States government. They are judged not only by their professional ability but by their manners in social and official life, at home and abroad."[18] These traditions are the essence of our esprit de corps.

It is not surprising that we didn't invent most of our military traditions. Instead, we have taken them form other militaries—primarily from the British. We can look at some of these customs and courtesies to see where they began. We will begin by looking

at the origin of flags, especially of our own flag since a significant portion of military protocol is centered around customs and courtesies to the flag.

It is believed that the flag originated from primitive races carrying a carved pole into battle displaying the tribal totem at the top. Ancient Egyptians, Greeks, Vikings, and Romans all carried some form of totem into battle. These symbols of their religion were thought to be a source of power and aid in victory, just as the Israelites carried the Ark which was the seat of their God. The staff "identified the forces, marked the position of their leader and served as a rallying point. Gradually it developed into a banner or standard. But its role remained the same."[19] The first United States flag can be traced back to the winter of 1775/1776 after the first shots were fired in the War for Independence. Adopted by the American colonists, this new flag was based on the British Red Ensign and other red and white striped flags and had several names: The Continental Colors, The Grand Union Flag, The Cambridge Flag, and The Congress Flag. "The Continental Colors was our unofficial national flag on July 4, 1776, Independence Day. It was the unofficial national flag and ensign of the United States Navy until June 14, 1777."[20] Francis Hopkinson, a delegate to the Continental Congress, believed we needed a new flag following our break from Great Britain. As a result, Hopkinson designed a flag that was accepted by Congress on June 14, 1777. Congress adopted the following resolution from its Marine Committee: "Resolved, that the Flag of the United States be thirteen stripes alternate red and white, that the Union be thirteen stars white on a blue field representing a new constellation."[21] George Washington stated: "We take the stars from heaven, the red from our mother country, separating it by white stripes,

thus showing that we have separated from her, and the white stripes shall go down to posterity representing liberty."[22]

It is thought the origin of the hand salute goes back to earlier times when the right hand, which holds the weapon, was raised as a greeting of friendship and perhaps to show no ill intent. The lower ranking always made the first gesture out of courtesy. The military salute has evolved from being rendered by both hands to only the right hand. One more reasonable explanation of the origin of the hand salute suggests it "was a long-established military custom for juniors to remove their headgear in the presence of superiors. In the British Army as late as the American Revolution a soldier saluted by removing his hat. With the advent of cumbersome headgear like the shako, busby and the bearskin which could not be readily doffed, the act of removing the hat degenerated into a gesture of grasping the visor. If finally became conventionalized into something resembling our modern hand salute."[23]

There are other forms of saluting instead of rendering the hand salute. Presenting Arms with a rifle is considered a token of submitting weapons to the person being honored. "The origin of this movement has been traced to the return of Charles II to England in 1660 to claim the throne. Col Monk's Coldstream Regiment, which professed the desire to place themselves at his service, was formed in a field. When the monarch approached, the command was given to 'Present your weapons for service under His Majesty.'"[24] Gun salutes came from honoring high ranking military and civilian officials and is traced back to the days when it took a long time to reload. By firing off all your guns upon the arrival of a high ranking dignitary, you showed yourself defenseless. It is believe naval superstition led to salutes being fired in odd numbers. Ships dipped their

sails to show respect and it also slowed their speed enough to allow embarking. These customs gradually changed from sails to the flag. "Flying the flag at half-staff probably comes from the naval custom of lowering sails in salute or as a sign of distress."[25]

Another custom is the principle that the position of honor is to the right. Perhaps this practice originated "from the days when gentlemen carried swords for protection. The stronger swordsman was given the position of honor (the right) so that his sword arm would be unhampered for a fast draw."[26]

Customs and courtesies are an important tradition in our military today. Throughout the military departments many traditions are the same; however, each service also tailors them to meet their unique needs. The Air Force has protocol for boarding airplanes while the Navy has special protocol for boarding its ships. These customs also change to reflect societal changes.

Notes

[1] Post, xvi.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Mitchell, Mary, with John Corr, *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Etiquette* (New York: Alpha Books, 1996), 4.
[5] Ibid., 5-6.
[6] Ibid., 6.
[7] Ibid., 5.
[8] Ibid., 6-9.
[9] Post, xvii.
[10] Radlovic, I. Monte, *Etiquette & Protocol* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1956), x.
[11] Ibid., xi.
[12] Ibid.
[13] McCaffree, Mary Jane, and Pauline Innis, *Protocol: The Complete handbook of Diplomatic, Official and Social Usage* (Washington, DC: Devon Publishing Company, Inc., 1985), xiii.
[14] Ibid., xiv.
[15] Ibid., xiv-xv.
[16] Ibid., xv-xviii.

Notes

[17] Ibid., xviii.

[18] Swartz, Oretha D., *Service Etiquette* (Annapolis, MA: Naval Institute Press, 1988), xiii.

[19] Brasch, R., *How Did It Begin* (New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1965), 202-204.

[20] Williams, Earl P., *What You Should Know About the American Flag* (Gettysburg, PA: Thomas Publications, 1997), 8.

[21] Ibid., 9.

[22] Williams, 208-209.

[23] Boatner, Major Mark M., III, *Military Customs and Traditions* (New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1956), 47.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Ibid., 48.

[26] Ibid., 44.

Chapter 3

Protocol in the Air Force

The code of Duty well performed, of Honor in all things, of Country above self is the unwritten unspoken guide on which the official acts of officers of the Air Force are based.

—The Air Officer's Guide

Since the Air Force originated from the Army, it is understandable that many early customs and courtesies also came from the Army. However, the greatest custom of the Air Force was to "inject into old customs grown cold through unthinking, routine obedience to them, a new glow—a new warmth—a new humor that says for itself: 'I'm not doing this thing because I should, because I have to, or because I'll be sorry if I don't—I'm doing it because I want to.'"[1] Like each military service, the senior leaders will have a tremendous influence on the protocol for that service. For the Air Force, leaders like General Arnold and General Doolittle served as models to be emulated.

Customs and courtesies for the Air Force were originally published in *The Air Officer's Guide* written in 1948. This guide was based on the *Officers Guide* which was used by Army officers. This guide provided written guidance to Air Force Officers on a variety of subjects, to include customs and courtesies as well as ceremonies. This written guidance enabled officers to fulfill the requirements inherent in their positions. In 1947, the Air Force published AFR 900-5, *Salutes, Honors, and Precedence* which also dealt with protocol matters. Throughout the years, there have been various sources for

material related to protocol functions; however, there was never a publication which tied all of the different aspects into a single volume. As a result, Protocol Officers were forced to search for subject material and rely to a great extent on civilian publications.

On 17 January 1955, a new function was added to the Office of the Secretary of the Air Staff—the Protocol and Visitors' Reception Office. "This office serves as an official reception room for visitors from Air Force Commands, other Government agencies and private industry. The officer-in-charge, a USAF Major, assisted by a stenographer, is also responsible for guidance on questions of domestic protocol; monitoring Air Staff representation at important Washington area functions; providing or coordinating official invitation lists, and for guidance and administrative support of Air Staff conferences with field personnel. Prior to the establishment of this office there was no one staff agency responsible for domestic protocol."[2] One of the first official guests lists for Air Force functions was created in this office for the 11 July 1955 dedication of the temporary Air Force Academy at Lowry Air Force Base in Denver, Colorado.[3] However, the Air Force did not publish any official written guidance for protocol officers and this dilemma has been addressed in the past on various occasions.

In 1974, Major Warren L. Steininger first addressed the lack of protocol guidance in the Air Force. While a student at Air Command and Staff College, Major Steininger's study was an attempt to establish basic protocol guidance. He was keenly aware of the subjective nature of protocol as a commander's program. His study discusses a survey of protocol officers in 1969 that showed that the available materials for training and functioning as a protocol officer were inadequate. He believed a significant reason was the lack of a protocol career field. Then, as now, protocol officers were selected from

various career fields for a tour in protocol and then returned to their primary career field. At that time, the only available guidance was civilian works on etiquette. There was no comprehensive guide that pulled together every aspect of protocol into one volume.[4]

While a student attending Air Command and Staff College in 1983, Major Patrick J. Carr wrote *Protocol, Ceremonies and Customs—An Air Force Officer's Handbook*. He handbook was written for "the Air Force officer who wants simple and specific information pertaining to protocol and etiquette, military ceremonies and military customs and courtesies."[5] This handbook was never published or distributed by the Air Force.

Another Air Command and Staff College student, Major Joyce K. Stouffer also wrote a protocol handbook in 1985. Major Stouffer believed every officer should have some knowledge of basic protocol because of the importance it plays in military lives. Her handbook was an attempt to provide "that general background on an officer's responsibilities regarding formal and informal functions."[6] Once again, this handbook was never published or distributed for use throughout the Air Force.

Major Jo A. Ball once again addressed the problem in the Air Force concerning protocol guidance while attending Air Command and Staff College in 1986. She stated the problem with previous attempts to create written guidance for the Air Force was the inability to get the guides into Air Force channels that could get them published and distributed throughout the entire Air Force. Major Ball expanded Captain Norman L. Watson's efforts to create a guide for 70XX officers who found themselves assigned to protocol. At that time, Administration Officers (70XX) were taught basic protocol skills while attending technical training. This career field was designated for protocol officers

in addition to administration functions. Fortunately for the Air Force, Major Ball's handbook, *Protocol Handbook—A Guide For The Base Protocol Officer*, did get published and distributed throughout the Air Force and is still in existence. This guide focused on customs and courtesies to the American Flag, Pledge of Allegiance, National Anthem, Air Force Song, saluting, rank and precedence, and official ceremonies.[7]

Throughout the years, the Air Force published Air Force Regulations dealing with specific areas related to protocol. These include AFR 35-54, *Rank, Precedence and Command*; AFR 50-14, *Drill and Ceremonies*; AFR 900-3, *Department of the Air Force Seal, Organizational Emblems, Use and Display of Flags, Guidons, Streamers, and Automobile and Aircraft Plates*; AFR 900-6, *Honors and Ceremonies Accorded Distinguished Persons*; and AFP 900-1, *Guide to Air Force Protocol*. In 1991, the Air Force underwent a HQ USAF Policy Review as part an initiative to change guidance. One result was the decision by the Chief of Staff to rescind all existing Air Force regulations in early 1994. Every regulation and the designated OPRs were reviewed. In 1994 new Air Force Instructions (AFIs) were established as the policy guidance for the Air Force. An important publication for Protocol Officers was AFR 900-3. However, when the decision was made to incorporate the information into a new AFI with Air Force History as the OPR, it was to include only information pertinent to the history function. As a result, guidance on various aspects of protocol were not incorporated into an AFI. Some subjects are addressed in AFMAN 36-2203, *Drill and Ceremonies*, but this is by no means an exhaustive work for protocol officers. This is where the Air Force is today, and it was only in the spring of 1998 that any Headquarters agency agreed to

take on protocol matters and become the OPR for any published guidance—the Office of the Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Air Force, SAF/AA.[8]

While the debate continued as to who would claim ownership of protocol guidance for the Air Force, another organizational change was occurring which affected protocol. On 1 March 1996, the office of SAF/AAI was eliminated and Information Management Officers (formerly Administrative Officers) were incorporated into the Communications and Information career field. As a result, we no longer had a pool of officers with protocol knowledge and experience because, once again, protocol assignments became Special Duty Assignments and were filled with officers from every career field throughout the Air Force. This policy for assigning protocol officers still exists today. Where once the Air Force "grew" protocol officers and had experts in the field, now protocol officers flow in and out of the field from other areas. This is serious problem that has been addressed at the Headquarters level. Currently, the Chief of Protocol, Headquarters, United States Air Force conducts an annual workshop on protocol for Air Force members serving in the field. This is a considerable cost to units and to the Air Force for a problem that could easily be solved with published guidance in the field.

The Army and Navy have also addressed this problem in the past and have solved it by publishing guidance for use throughout the services. The Army published Pam 600-60, *A Guide To Protocol And Etiquette For Official Entertainment*, which addresses such topics as invitations, receiving lines, ceremonies, precedence, and seating.[9] The Army has also published Army Regulation 840-10, *Flags, Guidons, Streamers, Tabards, and Automobile and Aircraft Plates*. This regulation prescribes the Army's policies for unit

and individual authorization for flags, display of flags, and customs and courtesies to the American Flag.[10] The Navy published a protocol handbook, OPNAVINST 1710.7, *Social Usage and Protocol Handbook*. This handbook provides guidance on issues such as invitations, seating, receptions, and calling cards.[11] Like the Army, the Navy also published a guide detailing the use, display, and associated customs and courtesies; NTP 13(A), *Flags, Pennants & Customs*.[12] It is obvious our sister services are aware of the important role protocol plays in military life. The existence of such published guidance within the Army and Navy are one more reason why the Air Force needs its own AFI or guide on protocol.

For a number of reasons there needs to be established one OPR for protocol issues in the Air Force. This need was reaffirmed at the Headquarters level when the General Services Administration published new guidance on POW/MIA Flag display. This guidance applied to all military installations; however, within the Air Force there was no agency or vehicle identified to distribute this information to the field. As a result, this important guidance has not been adhered to on Air Force Installations.[13] SAF/AA has agreed to create written guidance on protocol and become the OPR for protocol matters. However, the new dilemma is defining those aspects of protocol that need to be included in written guidance.

Notes

[1] _____, *The Air Force Officer's Guide* (Harrisburg, PA: The Military Service Publishing Company, 1948), 234.

[2] *History of the Office, Secretary of the Air Staff* (55/01/01-55/30/06, in USAF Collection, AFHRA), 1.

[3] Ibid., 2.

[4] Steininger, 1-3.

[5] Carr, Major Patrick J., *Protocol, Ceremonies and Customs – An Air Force Officer's Handbook* (Maxwell AFB: Air University, 1983), iii.

Notes

[6] Stouffer, Major Joyce K., *Protocol Handbook* (Maxwell AFB: Air University, 1985), iii.

[7] Ball, iii.

[8] *Instruction for Flag Protocol and Air Force Seal* (1 October 1993 Ltr from HQ USAF/HO to SAF/AAIX).

[9] Pam 600-60, *A Guide To Protocol And Etiquette For Official Entertainment* (15 October 1989).

[10] Army Regulation 840-10, *Flags, Guidons, Streamers, Tabards, and Automobile and Aircraft Plates* (1 July 1998).

[11] OPNAVINST 1710.7, *Social Usage and Protocol Handbook* (17 July 1979).

[12] NTP 13(A), *Flags, Pennants & Customs* (November 1982).

[13] *POW/MIA Flag Display* (GSA Bulletin FPMR, 19 March 1998).

Chapter 4

What Should We Publish?

> *I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.*
>
> —The Pledge of Allegiance

In considering a protocol guide for the Air Force, there are customs and courtesies that every member should know. Each of these will be addressed separately and include current, accepted guidance. This section is by no means an exhaustive discussion of protocol, only those subjects the author deems most critical to military officers.

Flag Etiquette

United States Code, Title 36, Chapter 10, Sections 173-178 established customs and courtesies to be afforded the flag of the United States. Federal law governs the display and use of the Flag and United States Code, Title 18, Chapter 33, Section 700 established penalties to "whoever knowingly mutilates, defaces, physically defiles, burns, maintains on the floor or ground, or tramples upon any flag of the United States."[1] Every military officer should be aware of the following customs and courtesies to the American Flag and guidance for displaying the flag on military installations.

> **Installation Flag.** Each Air Force Installation is authorized to fly on installation flag from reveille to retreat. Display of the flag for 24 hours a day to produce a patriotic effect if the flag is properly illuminated during

the hours of darkness. Each installation is limited to one illuminated flagstaff.

Half-staff. Mourning is observed by flying the flag at half-staff. Half-staff is the position of the flag when it is one-half the distance between the top and bottom of the staff. When flown at half-staff, the flag is first hoisted to the peak and then lowered to the half-staff position. The flag should be raised to the peak before it is lowered for the day. Flags carried by troops are never at half-staff. The flag is display at half-staff till noon on Memorial Day, then raised to the top of the staff. The flag is displayed at half-staff according to Presidential instructions, order, or according to recognized customs or practices not inconsistent with law. In foreign countries, when the President directs, the flag is flown at half-staff at Air Force installations, whether or not the flag of another nation is flown full-staff alongside the United States flag. This is the only time the United States flag is flown at a lesser height than other flags at the same time.

Suspended From a Projecting Staff. When the flag is displayed from a staff, the union of the flag is placed at the peak of the staff.

Suspended From a Building to Another Support. When the flag is suspended from a building to another support, the union of the flag is hoisted out first and remains away from the building.

Suspended Over the Middle of a Street. When the flag is displayed over the middle of a street, it is suspended vertically with the union to the north on a principally east and west street or to the east on a principally north and south street.

On a Speaker's Platform. When used on a speaker's platform, the flag, if displayed flat, should be displayed above and behind the speaker. When displayed from a staff in a church or public auditorium, the flag holds the position of prominence, in front of the audience. It is placed in the position of honor at the clergyman's or speaker's right as he or she faces the audience. Any other flag so displayed should be placed on the left of the clergyman or speaker or to the right of the audience.

In a Church or Auditorium. When the flag is displayed from a staff in a church or auditorium elsewhere than in the chancel, or on the platform it shall be placed in the position of honor at the right of the congregation or audience as they face the chancel or platform. Any other flag so displayed should be placed on the left of the congregation or audience as they face the chancel or platform.

Without Staff. When the flag is displayed other than by being flown from a staff, it is displayed flat, whether indoors or out, and so suspended that its folds fall free. When displayed flat against the wall, either

vertically or horizontally, the union is always to the observer's upper left. When displayed on aircraft or vehicles, the union I is always toward the front with stripes trailing.

Suspended Across a Corridor or Lobby. When the flag is suspended across a corridor or lobby in a building with only one main entrance, it should be suspended vertically with the union of the flag to the observer's left on entering. If the building has main entrances on the east and west, the flag suspended vertically near the center of the corridor or lobby with the union to the north. The union is placed to the east when the entrances are to the north and south. If there are entrances in more than two directions, the union should be to the east.

United States Flag With Flags of Foreign Nations. When flags of two or more nations are displayed, they fly from separate staffs of the same height. International usage forbids the display of the flag of one nation above that of another nation in time of peace.

United States Flag With Flags of States, Cities, Localities, or Pennants of Societies. When the flag is displayed in the center of a group of flags, the United States flag is at the highest point of the group. If it is desired that all flags be at the same level, the United States flag is given the position of honor. The position of honor is the flag's own right or on the observer's left. Another flag or pennant is not placed above, or if on the same level, to the right of the United States flag. When these flags are flown from adjacent staffs, the United States flag is hoisted first and lowered last.

Untied States Flag in Procession With Other Flags. In a procession with another flag or flags, the United States flag is either on the marching right—that is, the flag's own right—or if there is a line of other flags, in front on the center of the line.

Crossed Staff. When the flag is displayed with another flag from crossed staffs, the United States flag is on the right (observer's left) and its staff is in front of the staff of the other flag.

The United States Flag is Not to be: Dipped to any person or thing. Displayed with the union down except as a signal of distress in instances of extreme danger to life or property. Permitted to touch anything beneath it such as the ground, the floor, merchandise, and so forth. Carried flat or horizontally. Festooned, but allowed to fall and hang free. Used as a drapery of any sort. Used as a covering for a ceiling. Used as a receptacle for receiving or carrying any object. Used as the covering for a statue or monument, but it may form a distinctive feature of the ceremony of unveiling a statue or monument. Used for advertising purposes in any manner whatsoever. Used as a covering for an automobile or draped over

any part of a vehicle, train, boat, or airplane. Fastened, displayed, used, or stored in a manner that permits it to be easily torn, soiled, or damaged in any way. Used as a furniture covering. Worn or used as an article of clothing. Marked on, or should never have placed on it or attached to it, any mark, insignia, letter, word, figure, design, picture, or drawing of any kind.

Lowering and Folding. When the United States flag is lowered from the staff, no portion of it is allowed to touch the ground either in lowering or in folding.[2]

National Anthem

Customs and courtesies to the National Anthem or To the Colors can be found in AFMAN 36-2203. Because of the significance of the National Anthem and To the Colors, I believe it is important to also incorporate the associated customs and courtesies into protocol guidance. Every military member should be familiar with this guidance as stated in AFMAN 36-2203:

> The US flag is symbolic of the United States and the principles for which it stands. The national anthem is a declaration of reverence and loyalty to the United States with the flag as an emblem.
>
> On certain occasions, such as during inclement weather or when a band is not present for a retreat ceremony, To the Colors is played instead of the national anthem. To the Colors is a bugle call sounded as a salute to the flag and it symbolizes respect to the nation and the flag the same as the national anthem does.
>
> When in uniform in formation, but not a part of a ceremony, the unit commander commands present arms when the national anthem or To the Colors is played. The unit should be faced toward the flag before being given present arms.
>
> When in uniform, but not in formation:
>
> Outdoors, at any ceremony where the US flag is present, come to attention, face the flag in the ceremony, and salute. At sporting events, if the flag is visible, face the flag and salute. If the flag is not visible, face the band and salute in its direction. If the music is recorded, face the front and salute. At all other outdoor occasions, follow the same general

principle, come to attention, salute, and face the flag, if visible, or the music.

Indoors, when the national anthem or To the Colors is played, face the flag (if present) and assume the position of attention. If no flag is present, assume the position of attention facing the music. Do not salute unless under arms.

When in civilian clothing outdoors, take the same action as when in uniform, but use the following manner of saluting. Men remove the headdress with the right hand and hold it at the left shoulder with the right hand over the heart. Men without hats and women salute by standing at attention and placing the right hand over the heart.

When in civilian clothing indoors, render the civilian salute by standing at attention and placing the right hand over the heart.

In vehicles during an Air Force flag ceremony, the driver brings the moving vehicle to a stop at the first note of the national anthem or To the Colors. Personnel in vehicles, including the driver, remain seated at attention.

Air Force photographers and camera operators render appropriate honors outlined above except when they are specifically assigned to photograph others rendering honors.

Flags and national anthems of friendly foreign countries are shown the same marks of respect.[3]

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was written in Boston in 1892 and was officially approved by Congress on June 22, 1942, and on June 14, 1954 (Flag Day), the words "under God" were added. Upon signing the act, President Eisenhower said "In this way we are reaffirming the transcendence of religious faith in America's heritage and future; in this way we shall constantly strengthen those spiritual weapons which forever will be our country's most powerful resource in peace and war."[4] We pledge allegiance to the flag because it represents our country. Customs and courtesies to the Pledge of Allegiance can also be found in AFMAN 36-2203 and are as follows:

In military formations and ceremonies, the Pledge of Allegiance is not recited.

At protocol functions and social and sporting events that include civilian participants, military personnel should:

When in uniform outdoors, stand at attention, remain silent, face the flag, and render the hand salute.

When in uniform indoors, stand at attention, remain silent, and face the flag. Do not render the hand salute. Where the participants are primarily civilians or in civilian attire, reciting the Pledge of Allegiance is optional for those in uniform.

When in civilian attire, recite the Pledge of Allegiance standing at attention, facing the flag with the right hand over the heart. Men should remove their headdress with the right hand and hold it over their left shoulder, hand over the heart.[5]

Precedence

The President of the United States determines the official order of all American officials on the Precedence List and the State Department is responsible for determining precedence among foreign representatives. The relative rank of foreign officials is determined by the dates on which they were accredited to the United States, put simply, their respective seniority. The Precedence List is used by the White House for official functions and is by no means a rigid document for all Americans to follow. This list has remained unchanged for many years with the significance of the rank of cabinet secretaries based on the date of the establishment of the department and position.[6]

The Department of Defense establishes precedence based on the State Department's protocol list, it is tailored to meet the organizational structure of the Department. The following is the official order of precedence:

The President
The Vice President
Governor of a state (when in his or her own state)

The Speaker of the House of Representatives
The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court
Former Presidents of the United States
The Secretary of State
Ambassadors of foreign countries accredited to the United States
Ministers of foreign countries accredited to the United States
Associate Justices of the Supreme Court (by date of appointment)
The Cabinet (other than the Secretary of State)
The Secretary of the Treasury
The Secretary of Defense
The Attorney General
The Secretary of the Interior
The Secretary of Agriculture
The Secretary of Commerce
The Secretary of Labor
The Secretary of Health and Human Services
The Secretary of Housing and Urban Development
The Secretary of Transportation
The Secretary of Energy
The Secretary of Education
The President Pro Tempore of the Senate
Former Governors
Senators (according to number of years they have served)
Governors of states (when outside their own state; relative precedence determined by their state's date of admission to the Union, or alphabetically by state)
Acting heads of executive departments
Former Vice Presidents of the United States
Congressmen (according to the length of continuous service; if this is the same, arrange by date of their state's admission to the Union, or alphabetically by state)
Delegates of territories
Charge d' Affaires of foreign countries
Former Secretaries of State
Deputy and Under Secretaries of executive departments
Secretaries of the military departments (Army, Navy, Air Force, in that order)
Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
Retired Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
Members, Joint Chiefs of Staff (by date of appointment to JCS)
Retired Service Chiefs
Five-Star Generals and Admirals
Director, Central Intelligence Agency
Commandant of the Coast Guard
U.S. Ambassadors accompanying foreign chiefs of state on a state visit
U.S. Ambassadors on assignment within the United States
Assistant Secretaries of executive departments (by date of appointment)
Judges of the U.S. Court of Military Appeals
Under Secretaries of the military departments (same order as Secretaries)

Governors of territories
Generals and Admirals (four-star grade)
Assistant Secretaries of military establishments (by date of appointment)
The Special Assistant to the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Defense
Assistants to the Secretary of Defense
General Counsels of military departments
Deputy Under Secretaries of Defense (by date of appointment)
Three-Star military
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretaries of Defense and Deputy General Counsel of the Department of Defense (by date of appointment)
Former foreign Ambassadors
Former U.S. Ambassadors and Ministers of foreign countries
Ministers of foreign powers (not accredited heads of missions)
Deputy Assistant Secretaries of executive departments and deputy counsels
Deputy Under Secretaries of the Army, Navy, and Air Force (by date of appointment)
Counselors of foreign embassies
Consuls General of foreign powers
GS-18
Two-Star military (Rear Admiral, upper half)
Deputy Assistant Secretaries of military departments (by date of appointment)
Heads of offices, Office of the Secretary of Defense
GS-17
One-Star military (Rear Admiral, lower half, and Commodore)
Heads of offices of military departments
Foreign counsels
GS-16
Captains and Colonels
GS-15[7]

Miscellaneous

The place of honor for a ranking official, military or civilian, is to the right. Seated, they are placed to the right of the host. In a vehicle, the place of honor is in the rear seat, to the right of the driver.

General officers are allowed to display flags of their rank in their office or when appearing as a guest at military functions. The arrangement of stars and colors are different for each military department. The Secretary, Chief of Staff, Under Secretary, Vice Chief of Staff, and Assistant Secretaries of the Air Force have special flags denoting their position. These are used in the same manner as general officer flags.

> When traveling in a vehicle or plane, flags denoting the rank of the official are usually displayed in the window. These are only displayed when the ranking individual is in the vehicle.

This is not an exhaustive compilation of protocol guidance which needs to be published in a single volume. These are critical segments that every military member needs to know—without going through a search of various documents.

Conclusion

Protocol, customs and courtesies, etiquette, and manners are all a part of our daily life in the military. A critical analysis has shown the vital role protocol plays in shaping military tradition. These traditions set the military apart from the rest of society and create a bond for all past, present, and future military members. Our heritage shapes us and continues to influence the traditions of today.

Throughout history, customs and courtesies have governed official life in Washington, D.C. which has impacted the entire society. Each administration has its own unique social style and this ultimately reflects itself on the military.

This paper has analyzed the importance of protocol in the Air Force and has asked the question "Why doesn't the Air Force have written guidance, in a single volume, to answer the questions every member of the military has concerning protocol?" Protocol is a commander's program, giving local commanders some degree of latitude in the performance of their duties; however, there are statutory issues which need to be recognized and addressed at all levels. The potential to embarrass not only ourselves, but foreign dignitaries, is inherent in protocol—it is imperative the Air Force take action to resolve this problem. This problem has been addressed by each of the services in the past, with each creating some type of guidance. Even in the Air Force some protocol guidance had always existed until recent years. Although this Air Force guidance was never exhaustive on the subject of protocol and the available information was fragmented in a number of different publications, the bottom line is we had written guidance.

At Headquarters, United States Air Force, the Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Air Force has acknowledged that breaches of protocol can create problems that would be averted with written guidance. Hence, he has volunteered to become the Office of Primary Responsibility for protocol matters in the Air Force and has acknowledged there is a need to have written guidance for the entire service.

Protocol is vital to the Air Force. Our history and traditions are steeped deep in its customs and courtesies—we cannot afford to let them disappear.

Notes

[1] U.S.C. Title 18, *Crimes and Criminal Procedure* (Chapter 33, Section 700).
[2] AFR 900-3, *Department of the Air Force Seal, Organizational Emblems, Use and Display of Flags, Guidons, Streamers, and Automobile and Aircraft Plates* (20 March 1985), 14-16.
[3] AFMAN 36-2203, *Drill and Ceremonies* (3 June 1996), 77-80.
[4] McCaffree, 352.
[5] AFMAN 36-2203, 80.
[6] McCaffree, 6.
[7] Swartz, 281-283.

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